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GKM Digest 08112015.pdf

## **1 — (Video) Pollution flowing faster than facts in EPA spill, CNN, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/08/10/us/colorado-epa-mine-river-spill/>

The mustard hue of the Animas River in Colorado -- the most visible effect of a mistake by the Environmental Protection Agency that dumped millions of gallons of pollutants into the water -- is striking. Just a glance at a photo of the orange-yellowish slush is enough to know that something seems wrong. Scientists will have to say just how wrong, and possibly dangerous, the contamination is, though five days after the spill answers are few.

## **2 — Gold mine's toxic plume extends to Utah, USA Today, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/08/10/navajo-nation-epa-mine-wastewater-spill/31399517/>

The plume of heavy metals released last week into the Animas River from the Gold King Mine near Silverton, Colo., reached Utah on Monday. As of Monday evening, officials said the plume of contamination was southeast of Montezuma Creek, Utah, and was headed for Lake Powell. Environmental Protection Agency officials say the pollutants in the plume include arsenic, lead, copper, aluminum and cadmium, but have not released any detailed information on the spill that started Wednesday morning and has since been contained.

## **3 State of Emergency: Colorado Wastewater Leak Far Exceeds First Estimates, NBC, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/colorado-mine-spill-toxic-wastewater-leak-far-exceeds-first-estimates-n407091>

Gov. John Hickenlooper of Colorado declared a state of emergency on Monday, five days after a spill that sent toxic water seeping from an abandoned gold mine and turned a river orange. The Environmental Protection Agency said Sunday that 3 million gallons of wastewater had spilled, three times as much as earlier estimates, and that health risks to humans and aquatic life were not yet clear.

#### **4 — State of emergency in NM, Albq Journal, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.abqjournal.com/626504/news/state-of-emergency-in-nm.html>

Five New Mexico water systems, including those of Aztec and Farmington, continued to rely on reserve storage Monday, five days after a 3 million-gallon spill dumped toxic heavy metals into the Animas and San Juan rivers, federal officials said. Gov. Susana Martinez said Monday that New Mexico will declare a state of emergency, which would release money to assist New Mexico businesses and communities affected by the spill. Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper and tribal officials in the Navajo Nation issued disaster declarations Monday.

#### **5 — Congressional delegation criticizes EPA response on Animas spill, Albq Journal, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.abqjournal.com/626232/politics/congressional-delegation-criticizes-epa-response-on-animas-spill.html>

Several members of New Mexico's congressional delegation wrote Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Gina McCarthy Monday criticizing the agency's response to the Gold King Mine spill that has dumped three million gallons of wastewater into the Animas River. Democratic Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, along with Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, who represents northern New Mexico, said the EPA needs to improve communication with state and local officials, and the public about the nature of the spill.

#### **6 — EPA officials visit mouth of Gold King Mine north of Silverton, Colo, Farmington Daily Times, 8/10/2015**

[http://www.daily-times.com/four\\_corners-news/ci\\_28618359/epa-officials-visit-mouth-gold-king-mine-north](http://www.daily-times.com/four_corners-news/ci_28618359/epa-officials-visit-mouth-gold-king-mine-north)

Environmental Protection Agency officials met at the mouth of the Gold King Mine Monday afternoon to discuss last week's breach, which discharged 3 million gallons of heavy-metal laden water into a tributary of the Animas River.

EPA on-scene coordinator Hayes Griswold explained to San Juan County, Colo., officials that an EPA team working at the mine on Wednesday underestimated how much pressure was hidden behind the debris that plugged the mine's entrance.

**7 – San Juan County residents express concerns over livestock, crops, Daily Times, 8/10/2015**

[http://www.daily-times.com/four\\_corners-news/ci\\_28615875/san-juan-county-residents-express-concerns-over-livestock](http://www.daily-times.com/four_corners-news/ci_28615875/san-juan-county-residents-express-concerns-over-livestock)

San Juan County residents along the Animas River are concerned about their livestock and crops after 3 million gallons of toxic mining waste entered the river over the last week. The New Mexico Environment Department and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are testing private domestic water supply wells in the Animas River Valley.

**8 — Aztec implements water restrictions as everyone waits for test results, Daily Times, 8/10/2015**

[http://www.daily-times.com/four\\_corners-news/ci\\_28613344/aztec-announces-stage-one-water-restrictions-residents](http://www.daily-times.com/four_corners-news/ci_28613344/aztec-announces-stage-one-water-restrictions-residents)

Bloomfield officials are offering to share water — which they pump from the San Juan River at a point that was not exposed to a plume of water polluted with mine waste — if the water exposed to the contamination remains too toxic to treat for an extended period. And the city will impose water restrictions on its residents to help out others in need, if necessary, the city's mayor said Monday.

**9 — Navajo Nation Prepares Lawsuit Against EPA After Mine Spill, KNAU, 8/11/2015**

<http://knau.org/post/navajo-nation-prepares-lawsuit-against-epa-after-mine-spill>

The 3 million gallons of mining waste that spilled into Colorado's Animas River is now flowing into the San Juan River on the Navajo Nation. Tribal officials have declared a state of emergency and are preparing to sue the Environmental Protection Agency. Arizona Public Radio's Ryan Heinsius reports.

**10 — Officials downstream from Colorado mine spill demand answers, Muskoka Region, 8/11/2015**

<http://www.muskokaregion.com/news-story/5792550-officials-downstream-from-colorado-mine-spill-demand-answers/>

Local officials in towns downstream from where millions of gallons of mine waste spilled into a southwest Colorado river are demanding answers about possible long-term threats to the water supply. Colorado and New Mexico declared stretches of the Animas and San Juan rivers to be disaster areas as the orange-colored waste stream made its way downstream toward Lake Powell in Utah after the spill Wednesday at the abandoned Gold King mine near Silverton, Colorado.

#### **11 — EPA May Be Liable for Losses in Colorado Mine Spill, Bloomberg, 8/10/2015**

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-08-10/epa-seen-liable-for-loses-after-colorado-mine-spill-fouls-river>

The Environmental Protection Agency and its contractors may have to pay millions of dollars in damages after mistakingly releasing toxic sludge that tainted a Colorado river, preventing its use by ranchers and residents. Mustard-colored water continued to leak Monday from the long-abandoned Gold King Mine in Silverton, Colorado, and into the Animas River, after the EPA said it “unexpectedly triggered” a Aug. 5 blowout. The agency set up a claims process for losses from the 3 million gallons that leaked, three times more than initially estimated.

#### **12 — Environmental Agency Uncorks Its Own Toxic Water Spill at Colorado Mine, NY Times, 8/10/2015**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/11/us/durango-colorado-mine-spill-environmental-protection-agency.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/11/us/durango-colorado-mine-spill-environmental-protection-agency.html?_r=0)

The Animas River is the cultural soul of this patch of southwestern Colorado, a sort of moving Main Street that hosts multiple floating parades a year and is typically bustling with rafters and kayakers. Schoolchildren study the river. Sweethearts marry on its banks. Its former name, given by Spaniards, is el Río de las Ánimas, the River of Souls.

But since Wednesday, the Animas has been grievously polluted with toxic water spilled from one of the many abandoned mines that pockmark the region — a spill for which the Environmental Protection Agency has claimed responsibility, saying it accidentally breached a store of chemical-laced water.

#### **13 Frustrations grow at EPA town hall on Animas River spill, KOAT, 8/11/2015**

<http://www.koat.com/news/nm-gov-to-declare-state-of-emergency-over-animas-river-spill/34639546>

Nearly 3 million gallons of contaminated wastewater from Colorado’s Gold King mine has made

its way into the Animas River since an EPA mistake last week. The wastewater began spilling last Wednesday when an EPA-supervised cleanup crew accidentally breached a debris dam that was flowing at 550 gallons per minute.

#### **14 — (Video) Outrage grows over EPA's contamination of Western rivers, CBS, 8/11/2015**

<http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/outrage-grows-over-epas-contamination-of-western-rivers/>

Colorado's governor will visit Durango Tuesday to assess the damage from the Gold King Mine spill. Colorado and New Mexico are under states of emergency along parts of the Animas and San Juan Rivers. The Environmental Protection Agency accidentally triggered the massive sludge spill last week. Mireya Villarreal reports from Farmington, New Mexico.

#### **15 — Colorado EPA spill: 'We looked at the river and we cried', FOX CT, 8/11/2015**

<http://foxct.com/2015/08/11/colorado-epa-spill-we-looked-at-the-river-and-we-cried/>

From his backyard in, Tom Bartles can see the Animas River, which was stained an unnatural orange. The Environmental Protection Agency accidentally released millions of gallons of pollutants into the water last week, turning the typically blue water to the color of mustard. "Everybody in town knew it was coming. It was hard to wake up in the morning and see an orange river," Bartles told CNN. "Many of the locals in this region are probably going to experience a certain level of mourning."

#### **16 We misjudged pressure in gold mine before spill, USDA Today, 8/11/15**

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/08/11/epa-we-misjudged-pressure-gold-mine-before-spill/31447379/>

As 3 million gallons of heavy-metal laden water made its way into Utah and headed west to Lake Powell, Environmental Protection Agency officials met at the mouth of the Gold King Mine Monday afternoon to discuss last week's breach into a tributary of the Animas River. EPA on-scene coordinator Hayes Griswold explained to San Juan County, Colo., officials that an EPA team working at the mine on Wednesday underestimated how much pressure was hidden behind the debris that plugged the mine's entrance.